

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In the Application of: Bruno LANGLOIS

Continuation of Serial Number: 09/462,995

Examiner : N/A

Filing date: January 14, 2000

Group Art Unit: N/A

Serial Number: To be assigned

Filing date: To be assigned

**For: FLUIDS FOR USE IN OILFIELD DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING  
DEACETYLATED XANTHAN GUM AND AT LEAST ONE COMPOUND  
INCREASING THE IONIC STRENGTH OF THE MEDIUM**

Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Dear Sir:

Prior to calculation of filing fee, please enter the following amendment :

In the Specification:

On page 1, just after the title, please add the new following paragraph:

This application is a continuation application of Application Number 09/462,995  
filed on January 14, 2000.

In the Claims

Please cancel claims 1 to 21 and replace them with the following new claims 22 to 37:

22. (New) A process for oil extraction comprising the step of using, at a temperature between 100 and 140°C, a guar-free drilling fluid comprising a xanthan gum having a percentage of acetyl groups in the range 0 to 3%, said xanthan gum being in the form

of a polypentamer, at least one compound which increases the ionic strength of the fluid, and at least one fluid loss control agent.

23. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein the drilling fluid comprises 0.01% to 2% of xanthan gum.

24. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein the percentage is 0 to 2%.

25. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein the fluid loss control agent is selected from the group consisting of cellulose compounds, polyacrylamides, high molecular weight polyacrylates, succinoglycanes, native starch, native starch derivatives, and charcoal.

26. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein the compound increasing the ionic strength of the fluid is a salt of mineral or organic acid.

27. (New) A process according to claim 26, wherein the salt is an alkali metal halide, alkaline-earth metal halide, a sulphate, carbonate, bicarbonate, silicate, phosphate, an alkali metal formate, alkaline-earth metal formate, alkali metal acetate, or an alkaline-earth metal acetate.

28. (New) A process according to claim 27, wherein the compound increasing the ionic strength of the fluid is an alkali or alkaline-earth metal chloride.

29. (New) A process according to claim 27, wherein the compound increasing the ionic strength of the fluid is a sodium silicate.

30. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein the compound increasing the ionic strength of the fluid is present in said fluid in an amount of 5000 to 110000 parts per million.

31. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein said fluid further comprises a thinner or dispersing agent in a quantity of 0 to 1% with respect to the total fluid weight.

32. (New) A process according to claim 31, wherein the thinner or dispersing agent is selected from the group consisting of polyphosphates, tannins, lignosulphonates, lignin derivatives, peats, lignites, polyacrylates and polynaphthalene sulphonates.

33. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein said fluid further comprises further comprises an oxygen scavenger in an amount of 0 to 0.25% with respect to the total fluid weight.

34. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein said fluid further comprises a weighting compound selected from the group consisting of alkaline-earth metal sulphates, carbonates, silicates, alkaline-earth metal bromides, zinc bromides, and iron oxides.

35. (New) A process according to claim 31, wherein said fluid further comprises at least one mineral colloid selected from the group consisting of attapulgite, barite and bentonite.

36. (New) A process according to claim 22, the drilling fluid further comprises water.

37. (New) A process according to claim 22, wherein the oil extraction comprises well development operations, drilling operations, work-over operations, completion operations or oilfield production.

**REMARKS**

The preliminary amendments are filed to comply with the claims structure and wording according to the United States Patent law. It is asserted that these amendments do not add new matter. Support for these amendments can be found in the specification and claims as originally filed.

Entry of these amendments is respectfully requested.

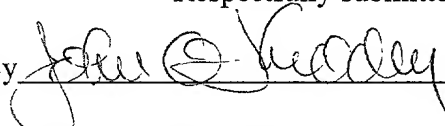
Should the Examiner have any questions regarding these remarks that would further advance prosecution of the claims to allowance, the examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned Attorney at (609) 860-4190. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

October 22, 2001

Rhodia Inc.  
259 Prospect Plains Road  
CN7500  
Cranbury, NJ 08512

Respectfully submitted,

By



John A. SHEDDEN  
Registration No. 25,644  
Tel: (609) 860-4190  
Fax: (609) 860-0503